

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /059 W

-----261002Z 124598 /10

O R 260930Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5552

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USIA WASHDC

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BRUSSELS FOR SECRETARY VANCE

USNATO FOR AMBASSADOR TOON

USIA FOR IOP, IBS, IPS, IEU

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR SOPN UR US

SUBJECT: TASS REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S MARCH 24 NEWS CONFERENCE

REF: MOSCOW 4040

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. TASS REACTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S

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MARCH 24 PRESS CONFERENCE, PRINTED IN PRAVDA MARCH 26,
IS UPBEAT ON THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE VANCE VISIT BUT
UNYIELDING ON SALT AND HUMAN RIGHTS. ON THE LATTER,
TASS SPECIFICALLY CLAIMS THAT THE PRESIDENT'S VERSION
OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AMOUNTS TO INTERFERENCE IN
THE USSR'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS, AND THEN REPEATS BREZHNEV'S
FORMULATION THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL NOT TOLERATE

SUCH INTERFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE TASS ITEM, DATE-LINED WASHINGTON AND CARRIED IN THE CENTRAL PRESS MARCH 26, NOTES THAT THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE FOCUSED ON SECRETARY VANCE'S MOSCOW VISIT. TASS QUOTES PRESIDENT'S REMARK THAT HE STUDIED BREZHNEV'S TRADE UNION SPEECH, AS WELL AS TULA SPEECH, AND THOUGHT THEY WERE VERY CONSTRUCTIVE.

3. THE PRESIDENT TERMED SALT AS AN EXTREMELY COMPLICATED PROBLEM, THE ITEM CONTINUES, SAID THE U.S. DID NOT KNOW IF ANY SUCCESS WOULD BE ACHIEVED BUT WAS GOING TO MOSCOW WITH GREAT HOPES, AND NOTED THAT TO DATE THE SOVIET UNION HAS DEMONSTRATED A DESIRE TO COOPERATE.

4. ON THE SUBSTANCE OF SALT, TASS SAYS THAT ON THE ONE HAND THE PRESIDENT SPOKE IN FAVOR OF OBSERVING THE VLADIVOSTOK ACCORDS, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND AGAIN RAISED THE QUESTION OF DEFERRING SEVERAL OF THE "MOST COMPLICATED AND DISPUTED PROBLEMS." THIS, TASS ADDS (FOLLOWING THE LINE OF THE TASS ACCOUNT OF THE PRESIDENT'S UN SPEECH), "IN FACT IS A DEPARTURE FROM THE VLADIVOSTOK UNDERSTANDING (DOGOVORENNOSTI)."

5. TASS INDICATES NO GIVE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. PRESIDENT CARTER AGAIN REPEATED "HIS VERSION" OF HUMAN RIGHTS, "WHICH IN FACT SIGNIFIES ATTEMPTS OF THE USA TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER STATES, INCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION" (THE WORDING IS VIRTUALLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IDENTICAL TO THAT IN TASS' REACTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S UN SPEECH ON HR, EXCEPT HERE THE PHRASE "INCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION" IS ADDED).

6. TASS THEN STATES THAT "BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT OF THE USA TRIED TO INTERPRET IN HIS OWN WAY THE POSITION OF THE SOVIET UNION ON THIS QUESTION, IT IS APPROPRIATE TO RECALL AGAIN THAT WHICH WAS CLEARLY AND FIRMLY STATED BY L.I. BREZHNEV AT THE TRADE UNION CONGRESS: WE WILL NOT TOLERATE INTERFERENCE IN OUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS FROM ANY QUARTER OR UNDER ANY PRETEXT."

7. AT THE END OF THE PIECE, TASS MENTIONS THE MIDDLE EAST (THE PRESIDENT REPEATED THE WELL-KNOWN U.S. POSITION), VIETNAM (THE PRESIDENT GENERALLY COMMENTED ON NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS), AND U.S. INTERNAL PROBLEMS (INFLATIONARY PRESSURE WILL REMAIN HIGH, AND DOMESTIC PROGRAMS MAY BE CUT).

8. COMMENT. WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT EACH WORD OF THIS
TASS ACCOUNT WAS CAREFULLY REVIEWED AT A HIGH LEVEL PRIOR
TO PUBLICATION, AS SEEMS TO BE INDICATED BY THE FACT
THAT THE ITEM DID NOT APPEAR ON THE TASS WIRE UNTIL
EARLY MORNING MARCH 26 (MOSCOW TIME). THE ITEM STRIKES
US AS MODERATE OVERALL, WHILE SIGNALLING NO GIVE ON SALT
OR HUMAN RIGHTS. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT FOR THE SECOND TIME
IN REPORTING PRESIDENT'S RECENT REMARKS ON SALT, TASS
IGNORES HIS REFERENCE TO REDUCTIONS BELOW VLADIVOSTOK
LEVELS (REPORT OF UN SPEECH ALSO MADE NO MENTION OF CUTS).
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, PRESS CONFERENCES, SALT (ARMS CONTROL)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MOSCOW04053
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770104-0706
Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770319/aaaaaqcb.tel
Line Count: 127
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 45023ab1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MOSCOW 4040
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2986819
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TASS REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S MARCH 24 NEWS CONFERENCE
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, UR, US, (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/45023ab1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009